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12 March 1955

MEMORANDUM FOR: Deputy Director (Intelligence)

SUBJECT: Afro-Asian Conference Developments

Premier Nu of Burma, presently on a goodwill mission to Thailand, has expressed doubt that the Afro-Asian conference would take decisive action on any major world problem. In his view, the conference was essentially to give Asian and African leaders an opportunity to meet each other and hold friendly discussions.

The manner in which the Bandung meeting is being organized suggests that the sponsoring powers intend to maintain maximum control over the proceedings, possibly with a view of preventing their bogging down in controversy. [REDACTED]

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Whether or not decorum can be maintained remains to be seen, however. Communist propaganda continues to indicate that they regard the meeting as an outstanding opportunity to expound on such familiar themes as anticolonialism and coexistence as well as to denounce the US. In the meantime, Soviet output has increasingly stressed US "intent" to undermine the proceedings or to direct them along lines advantageous to the US by manipulating stooges. Thus the Moscow press has predicted that the Thai and Philippine delegations will be "Trojan horses of Dulles." Soviet commentary further charges that President Eisenhower's economic aid plan may be used to "seize the initiative" and alleges that the US hopes to prevent a rapprochement between Peiping and other Asian countries.

In addition to this normal propaganda activity, the Communists are expected to exploit a number of other opportunities to strengthen their position before the conference begins. A Communist-inspired "Asian Conference for Easing International Tensions" which will be attended by large delegations from

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the USSR, North Korea, and North Vietnam is scheduled to be held in New Delhi only a few days before the Bandung conference convenes. Although the timing is coincidental, the Communists at New Delhi will almost certainly set the tune of their propaganda to be used in Indonesia.

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Under these circumstances it is difficult to see how controversial issues can be successfully avoided, the wishes of the sponsors notwithstanding. Peiping, for instance, will undoubtedly call the conference's attention to the Formosa issue. On this matter the Chinese Communists will find a certain amount of sympathy, particularly among the neutralist sponsors.

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The problem of Ambassador Romulo's rank as leader of the Philippine delegation appears to have been solved by his appointment to the cabinet as minister without portfolio. The Indonesians had previously indicated that they would insist 25X1 that all leaders of delegation be at least of cabinet rank.

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